



Rep. Roger Bush

Report to the 2nd District

A Look at 2002

Committees:

Rules
Capital Budget
Financial Institutions & Insurance
Technology,
Telecommunications & Energy
Veterans' & Military Affairs
Economic Development

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Dear Friends,

Although it seems like the Legislature only just completed its work, we are heading back to Olympia in a few short weeks. I was glad to be back home in Graham and travel around Pierce County to meet with constituents and various groups. It was a great opportunity to let people know what happened in the 2001 session and talk about 2002.

This newsletter covers some the topics you brought to my attention. Personal safety and economic stability in our state top the list. As some of us feared, we are facing a budget shortfall. The horrific terrorist attacks on our country only exacerbated an already bleak budget outlook. Included in this newsletter are a few survey questions to help me better gauge your thoughts on these topics.

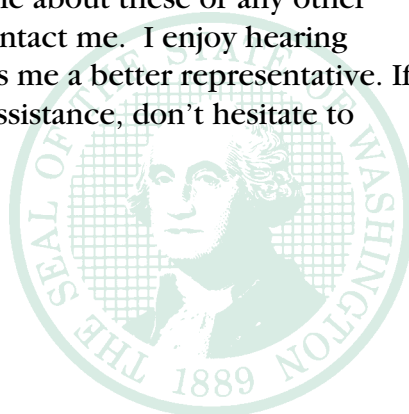
Throughout my time as your representative, I have worked hard to introduce common-sense legislation. And, I have always provided straight answers to your concerns about state laws and services. We have a difficult year ahead of us, but I am committed to working in a nonpartisan manner to address any budget shortfalls and protect vital state services without raising your taxes.

If you'd like to talk with me about these or any other matters, please feel free to contact me. I enjoy hearing from you — your input makes me a better representative. If you have questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to write, call or e-mail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Roger Bush".

Roger Bush



A Look at 2002

Capital Projects Held Hostage

In my previous newsletter to you, I detailed various capital improvements to educational facilities in our area that were funded in the 2001-03 Capital Budget. Unfortunately, as that letter went into the mail, Gov. Gary Locke put a freeze on all Capital Budget projects, leaving many projects unfinished and unfunded.

I agree that the Legislature and Governor must be proactive in responding to the economic difficulties facing this state. However, there are many other areas where budget cuts can be made without jeopardizing the futures of our children, unemployed workers, and others who require opportunities to gain new skills.

The terrorist attacks on our country affected each and every American and we all must do our part to revive the economy. Our role as your elected leaders must be to lead that charge. This will require earnest, honest discussion. We must try hard to work together.

2002 Preview:

For the most part, budget and transportation concerns will be the key items of discussion during the 2002 session, which convenes on January 14. I intend to be fully engaged in those discussions. Additionally, I will focus on moving the following bills through the Legislature.

- **House Bill 1008:** allowing the secretary of state, or staff of the elections division of the office of secretary of state, to make unannounced on-site visits to county election offices and facilities to observe the handling, processing, counting or tabulation of election ballots
- **House Bill 1269:** allowing a ONE-TIME impound hardship waiver for a vehicle owner if they were not the driver of an impounded vehicle.
- **House Bill 1277:** altering the state's Landlord-Tenant Act to allow legal documents to be sent by certified mail to the address provided for rent payments if a renter is unable to determine a landlord's current address



Representative Roger Bush worked with Secretary of State Sam Reed to pass important election reform laws in 2001.

State Agencies: Time to Work Smarter

Rather than admit their failure to plan for the future, some lawmakers and the governor have suggested raising taxes and cutting services for our most needy citizens. I don't agree with this tactic. Yes, we must all look closer at our spending habits, but state agency heads need to work smarter. State agencies remain too "top heavy" with middle management. This unfortunate trend has been building over many years, and it's time to reverse it.

Does each state board and commission meet a priority of the citizens of Washington? It's up to lawmakers to determine if each serves a purpose and meets a vital public need. **When faced with dwindling resources, we must unite and make the best decisions for the families of Washington.** I am hopeful my fellow legislators share this view.

Rep. Roger Bush

Operating Budget Poses Challenge for Lawmakers

The current 2001-03 general fund budget, crafted earlier this year by Democrat lawmakers, totals \$22.8 billion. However, the level of spending in the budget combined with declining revenues, according to some analysts, will result in a deficit in the general fund of close to \$1 billion.

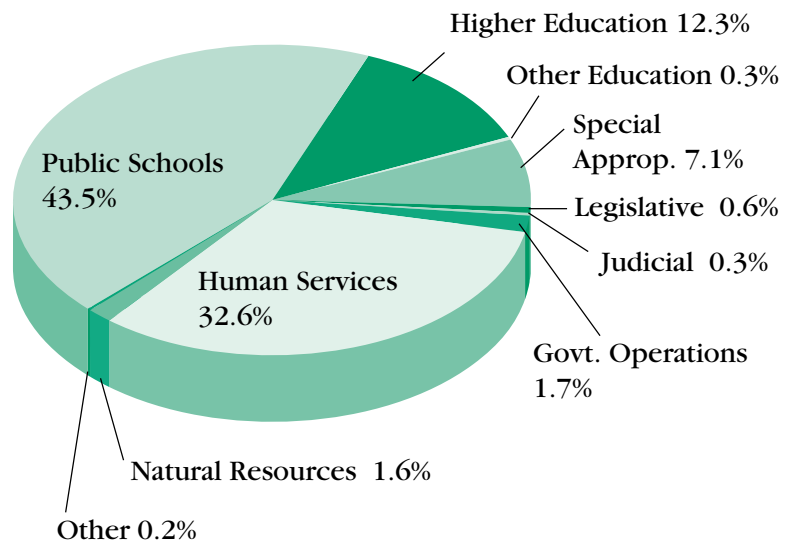
Difficult decisions are in store for lawmakers this year, as our state's economy continues to slow. The collection of tax revenues has been steadily slowing over the past several months due to the cooling economy. Health care costs are rising substantially, we've incurred \$10 million in emergency expenses fighting wildfires this summer, and security issues at schools and other public facilities have become a paramount concern.

Putting politics aside, state lawmakers will need to come together in the coming months to bring this budget back into balance and make it sustainable over the long term **without increasing taxes**. We must look for creative solutions to increase productivity, streamline services and assist people and businesses in our state. It's vitally important that we prioritize and protect the fundamental concerns of our state, such as public safety and education.

Throughout my years serving the 2nd District, I have been honest and you can be assured I will maintain the trust we have established. You have counted on me in the past and can count on me in 2002 to work in a non-partisan fashion to get the job done for you.

2001-03 State Operating Budget

General Fund - State Budget.....	\$22,786,783
Projected revenue	\$22,021,800
Difference	-\$765 million



Bringing a budget into balance

2001-03 Budget Picture

The September economic forecast showed a drop in tax revenue of more than \$101 million in the current biennium, and that was before economists had a chance to factor in the effects of the Sept. 11 attack on our state and national economy.

In 2001, an unsustainable budget that utilized one-time funding sources for ongoing expenses passed the Legislature, I didn't support that plan. You can now see why I opposed, and still oppose, raiding the pension funds as they are a one-time funding source the state can't afford to reimburse.

2001-03 Projected Tax Revenues	\$22,021,800
2001-03 Budget Expenditures	\$22,786,783
Difference	-\$765 million



Survey

I'd like to hear from you. What are your ideas and opinions on the upcoming legislative session? Please take a moment to fill out this brief survey. You can e-mail your responses to bush_ro@leg.wa.gov or mail the survey to the following address:

Rep. Roger Bush

PO Box 40600, Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

1. What do you believe is the most critical issue facing our state? Please rank in order of importance from a high of 1 to a low of 8.

- _____ Schools
- _____ Taxes
- _____ Government regulation
- _____ Transportation
- _____ Energy and utility issues
- _____ State budget shortfall
- _____ Jobs and economic security
- _____ Public safety

2. Do you believe certain state programs are "off limits" to budget cuts?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, which ones: _____

3. What are the appropriate penalties for those who make threats that require emergency response, even if in jest? (Example: hoaxes)

4. Do you support Gov. Locke's transportation funding proposal and tax increases, including a 9 cent-per-gallon gas tax increase, a new 2% auto and truck sales tax, an increase in the weight-mile tax on trucks and recreational vehicles, and a 12 cent-per-gallon increase in the diesel fuel tax?

_____ Yes _____ No

Comments: _____

5. Who should decide whether we have any new user fees or taxes for transportation in our state?

_____ Legislative referendum to the people
_____ The Legislature

Comments: _____



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